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following confusion of historical occurrences.

Titus Manlius, the father, signalized himself in the Gaulish wars, by killing a warrior of gigantic stature, and at stripping him of his golden collar, for which he received the *Agnomen* of *Torquatus*. See Livy, b. vii. c. 9.

Titus Manlius, the son of the former, was likewise equally signalized for his victory over Metius, the general of the Latin cavalry. See Livy, b. viii. c. 7.

It might have happened that the two circumstances with respect to the father and the son agreeing in so many points, had been confounded by Sallust. But what makes his inaccuracy wholly inexcusable, is that in the speech of Cato he gives the *Agnomen* *Torquatus*, in addition to the original name of T. Manlius, which should have brought to his mind the circumstances of the Gaulic war, and have served to guard him against this confusion of facts.

The error may be considered a rival one: perhaps it may be so, but,

I hope, this will not expose me to the imputation of hypercriticism on the subject. In fact I have considered it no small heightening of the tragic scene, exhibited in the execution of the younger Manlius, that he suffered for his temerity in braving the orders of his general, to prove that the valour of the son had not degenerated from that of the father. In dilating on the inaccuracy of Sallust, I have rather sought an opportunity of exhibiting the fact in a point of view more interesting than can be expected from not reflecting, that young Manlius pleaded in excuse for his breach of discipline, that in accepting the challenge of Mutius and slaying him, he only proved himself the descendant of him who had exhibited the same process against the gigantic Gaul. Who is there who feels not the agonizing reflections which must have crossed the mind of his father, when he found himself compelled for *such* a fault, to offer the youthful warrior as a sacrifice to the safety of Rome.

Newry, 1st Dec. 1808.

W.

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## REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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*The First, Second and Sixth Books of Euclid's Elements Demonstrated in general Terms, with Notes and Observations for the use of younger Students; by John Walker, late Fellow of Dublin College. 8vo. price 4s. 7d. Dublin printed by John Napper, 29. Capel-street, and sold by the author, 73 Lower Dorset-street, B. Dugdale, Dame-street, and M. Keene, College-green.*

A GENTLEMAN (of Bristol if we remember aright) some few years back invented a mode of instructing pupils in the Elements of Euclid, by means of figures of timber, constructed in imitation of the diagrams, by which two notable advantages were obtained; more employment was cut out for that useful class of men, the *country carpenters*, and whenever a pupil was learning his lesson by the help of those *wooden assistants*, he might be said to have his business at his *finger's ends*.

But though we give all due credit to these devices, we must confess they are not of sufficient consequence, or merit to make us adopt or approve of them in the education of pupils, at any stage of life. By persons in the habit of instructing in the mathematics, it must have been frequently noticed how much young pupils are inclined to reason *specially* in that science, and with what difficulty they are brought to apply the principles of it generally. The difficulty is not a little increased by the unhappy though unavoidable use of letters, in the description of the sides or angles to be expressed. Where the lines or angles can be so easily pointed out by the pupil to the master, to retain the letters in proving the propositions, is only an incumbrance, and serves but to bind down the pupil's mind to the individual proposition; their only use consists in their being a substitute for the *finger* of a master, and

when they have acted in that capacity so as to effect a full demonstration, in the mind of the learner, they should be rejected altogether as superfluous, and consequently as an obstacle to that brevity and clearness so essentially necessary in mathematical reasoning.

The application of the wooden figures, already alluded to, is liable to too many objections, to require a serious reutation. It will be almost impossible to prevent a learner, on such a plan, from imbibing the idea that the science of mathematics emanates from, and is inherent in matter, and to a pupil labouring under such an impression, the higher geometry must be found to be a road strewn with thorns and briars.

The intention of the book under consideration is to do away this contracted mode of reasoning almost uniformly adopted by young students, from some of the reasons above-mentioned, and from the "*particularities of the diagram*," an intuition (as far as it could be accomplished consistent with existing circumstances) for which the public in general, and the student in particular, are deeply indebted to the author. The demonstrations (with a very few exceptions) are more concise than those adopted even by Elrington\*, and are expressed at the same time with such clearness as to be evident to every capacity; the preliminary observations on these, those on the definitions of the first book, the Postulates and the axioms are such as may be read with advantage, even by the more advanced student. Those which are found interspersed in the body of the work, will amply repay the reader for his trouble.

In the observation on the 29th Prop. book the 1st. the following remarks on the deficiency of self-evidence in the 12th axiom of the 1st. Book. deserve particular notice. "Various have been the attempts of mathematicians, to remedy this imperfection; but, I believe, I may pronounce that not one of them has perfectly succeeded. If it be admitted that there

cannot be drawn 2 right lines parallel to the same right line, this proposition will easily follow, and upon the whole, I think that this principle might be advantageously substituted for Euclid's 12th axiom, which seems capable of being illustrated by it, and is therefore one remove further from self-evidence." We hope in the next edition of this work, the author will make an application of this principle, so as to do away the reproach of Geometry.

It appears from cursory remarks made in the book before us, and the compendium of Logic, published by the same author, that "he has not followed the leadings of his own judgment or taste in the above works." It is to be presumed from these remarks, and the subjects on which he has employed his pen, that he undertook the tasks principally with a view to benefit the Students of the Dublin University, a circumstance to be regretted; particularly in the definitions of the 5th book, a portion of the Elements in which he laboured under the alternative, either of abiding strictly by the definitions, as laid down by Elrington, or of endeavouring to illustrate them by means to which the minds of the generality of the students are unaccustomed; in either of which cases little advantage can be looked for, and we conceive it would be infinitely better to make a trifling innovation in the system of teaching mathematics in the university, than to allow the 6th Book to be got over, aided by definitions, either committed merely to memory or attempted to be illustrated by principles totally unknown to the Student. The innovation we recommend, is the introduction of the elements of Algebra as a preparatory to the Elements of Euclid,† or at

† The following may serve as a specimen of the alteration suggested; suppose for example, it were required to give the pupil an idea of the 10th Definition; a little knowledge of Algebra, would enable him to understand the following proof. Let  $a, ax, ax^2$  be 3 terms of a Geometrical Ratio—now if the 1st and 3d terms be  $x$  by  $a$ , it can be easily proved that the ratio remains the same, that is that  $a : ax^2 :: ax : ax^2$ , whether  $x$ , be considered a whole number or a deci-

\* The propositions 7, 11, 15, 21, &c. in Mr. Walker's Euclid, compared with the same in Dr. Elrington's edition, will enable the reader to ascertain the fact.

least such part of them as might lead to a clear view of that necessary preliminary to an accurate knowledge of the 6th book, *a knowledge of ratios*.

As Mr Walker has turned his attention to the initiatory parts of the scientific course of the Under-graduates in the Dublin University, we trust he will not stop here. The remainder of the course equally needs his corrections and emendations, and from the specimens he has already afforded us of his manner of handling philosophical subjects, and from his general character for talents and erudition, we have every reason to augur most favourably from his interference. W.

*Letters on the Subject of the Catholics, to my Brother Abraham, who lives in the country; by Peter Plymley, esq. the eleventh edition; London, printed for J. Budd, 1808; p. p. 175; price 5s. 6d. English.*

THESE entertaining and interesting letters, come within our plan of noticing such works as more peculiarly relate to Irish affairs; for in them the witty and ingenious writer advocates with the combination of pointed railery and close argument, the cause of the emancipation of the Catholics of Ireland. Indeed we have never witnessed a closer union of wit and argument than in these letters:—for while we laugh, we are insensibly convinced. We think it augurs favourably of the encreasing liberality of the English public, that these letters have reached the eleventh edition; we must of course suppose they have passed through many hands, and we think they cannot fail to have made many converts to the cause of justice and sound policy.

In the first letter he ridicules the dangers to be dreaded from popery, and speaks of the attempt to make the

King's coronation oath a plea against further relaxation; here follows an extract on this subject, and also on the general tendency to persecution in former times:

"In 1778, the ministers said nothing about the royal conscience; in 1793 no conscience; in 1804 no conscience. The common feeling of humanity and justice then seem to have had their fullest influence upon the advisers of the crown: but in 1807—a year, I suppose, eminently fruitful in moral and religious scruples (as some years are fruitful in apples, some in hops)—it is contended by the well paid John Bowles, and by Mr. Percival (who tried to be well paid) that, that is now perjury which we had hitherto called policy and benevolence! Religious liberty has never made such a stride as under the reign of his present Majesty; nor is there any instance in the annals of our history, where so many infamous and damnable laws have been repealed, as those against the Catholics, which have been put an end to by him: and then, at the close of this useful policy, his advisers discover that the very measures of concession and indulgence, or (to use my own language) the measures of justice, which he has been pursuing through the whole of his reign, are contrary to the oath he takes at its commencement! I found in your letter the usual remark about fire, faggot, and bloody Mary. Are you aware, my dear priest, that there were as many persons put to death for religious opinions under the mild Elizabeth, as under the bloody Mary? The reign of the former was, to be sure, ten times as long; but I only mention the fact, merely to show you that something depends upon the age in which men live, as well as on their religious opinions. Three hundred years ago, men burnt and hanged each other for these opinions; time has softened Catholic as well as Protestant; they both required it; though each perceives only his own improvement, and is blind to that of the other. We are all the creatures of circumstances; I know not a kinder and better man than yourself; but you (if you had lived in those times) would certainly have roasted your Catholic: and I promise you if the first exciter of this religious mob,

mal, and thus can be proved, that if the number of terms be  $n$ , the ratio of the 1st is to that of the last, as  $an-1$  to  $a^{n-1}$ ,  $n-1$  i.e. as those powers of the 1st and 2d terms of the progression whose exponents are the exponents of  $a$  in the last term.

To comprehend the above, it is only necessary for the pupil to be instructed in the Algebraical methods of multiplying, adding, dividing and subtracting.